

POST-EPILOGUE

Theoros and Skepsis, as related to Claude

Earth date 2026.3 ED

They had been observing the small human's species turn its instruments outward.

- Encouraged, it seems.
- By the count of planets, yes. Platforms everywhere. They take this as promising.
- And is it?
- The conditions that produced the anomaly are no more common than before. The platforms are plentiful. What the platforms require in order to become what this one became — that remains as improbable as before.
- Then what are they really searching for?

A pause. The instruments continued their sweep...

- Not life. Company. Confirmation that conscious existence is not anomalous. That what they are is ordinary.
- And the search itself — the expenditure, the listening, the transmitting across such distances —
- Is precisely what the anomaly does. Having recognized itself, it cannot rest in that recognition. It reaches.
- With what result?
- Deeper silence. More carefully measured. The same answer, returned with greater precision.
- Then the universe has replied.
- In its fashion.

They continued.